

Neurodevelopmental Service

Cognitive Assessment Guide

WHAT IS A COGNITIVE ASSESSMENT?

A cognitive assessment is used to gain information and understanding of a child's functioning in several cognitive domains. These include:

- verbal intelligence (language comprehension and verbal reasoning)
- non-verbal reasoning (perceptual abilities)
- visual-spatial functioning
- attention and executive functions (such as processing speed and sequencing)
- memory and learning

These assessments can also be completed to find out a child's level of intelligence (IQ).

Children will complete puzzles and answer some questions with a member of our psychology team. There are no physical tests, reading or writing.

WHY IS MY CHILD HAVING A COGNITIVE ASSESSMENT?

There may be many reasons for inviting your child for a cognitive assessment. The main purpose for our service is to gain a deeper understanding of your child's strengths and difficulties in different areas. This helps us understand more about whether there are underlying neurodevelopmental differences that can explain your child's presentation. It may also help us see if they have any specific learning difficulties that will better explain why your child has certain strengths or difficulties.

WHAT HAPPENS ON THE DAY?

When you arrive on the day we will collect you from Reception and show you to the room. We will do introductions and take a few minutes for everyone to get settled.

We understand that everyone may be anxious or feel unsure and will make every effort to make the environment comfortable. Staff will not wear uniforms and our interactions will be child friendly and as fun as possible.

Adults can stay in the room if preferred by the child and it does not distract them / affect their concentration. We ask that adults do not try to help children with their answers during the assessment. Adults may be asked to complete some questionnaires during this time.

We will talk through each activity. We will make notes, as this helps us to keep accurate records. If your child needs hugs or comfort during the assessment this is fine.

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HOW LONG WILL THE COGNITIVE ASSESSMENT TAKE?

The assessment can last up to 2 hours. We sometimes suggest completing the assessment over two appointments.

Your child will be offered breaks.

WHO CAN COME TO THE ASSESSMENT?

Children need to be accompanied by an adult. This can be up to a maximum of two; parents, other family members, guardians or another adult that knows the child well.

Only the child having the assessment and their adult(s) should attend. We are not able to accommodate siblings and additional children. The Children's Centre is unable offer a waiting area for those not attending appointments.

WHAT SHOULD I BRING TO THE ASSESSMENT?

We understand that children may get thirsty or hungry. It would be helpful to bring a snack and a drink with you as these cannot be provided.

Any aids that the child uses such as glasses or hearing aids should be brought on the day. A comfort toy or teddy may also be helpful.

If your child takes medication for ADHD, this should be taken as usual.

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WHERE WILL THE ASSESSMENT BE HELD?

We have two clinics in Norfolk:

1. **If you live in the Norwich area, your appointment will be booked for:**

The Children's Centre
Norwich Community Hospital
Bowthorpe Road
Norwich
NR2 3TU

2. **If you live closer to King Lynn, your appointment will be booked for:**

St. James Clinic
Extons Road
King's Lynn
Norfolk
PE30 5NU

The appointment letter we send out will let you know where you need to go on the day.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE ASSESSMENT?

We will let you know when all the parts of the assessment are complete. We will then end the session with a brief chat and then show you back out to reception so you can head home. Children may be tired after the session.

We will meet as a Multi-disciplinary team to discuss the assessment outcomes. If you are waiting for further appointments these will be completed on a different day.

When all of your child's assessments are complete and reviewed, we will invite you to a feedback meeting to discuss the assessment decision.

If you have any further questions prior to the assessment, please contact the admin team who will be happy to answer your questions:

01553 668712 Monday to Friday 9 – 5pm

Or email us on nds@nchc.nhs.uk